



**File Code:** 1950

**Date:** July 12, 2017

The Environmental Assessment for the **Hungry Lion Resource Management Project (Hungry Lion)** has been completed and is available for public review and comment. You are receiving this letter because you have provided comment on this project previously or have expressed an interest in the project. The document is available online at [www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=50134](http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=50134)

The Hungry Lion project is located on the Hungry Horse-Glacier View Ranger District, Flathead National Forest. The project area is east of the Flathead River and north of the Hungry Horse Reservoir and includes lands near the communities of Hungry Horse, Martin City, and Coram.

The project addresses multiple resource objectives including: improving forest health and diversity; reducing risk to firefighters and the public in the event of a wildfire; maintaining timber productivity on suitable lands; restoring hydrological process and aquatic habitat; and improving recreational opportunities and visitor safety at developed and dispersed recreation sites. It proposes to achieve these objectives through commercial harvest of vegetation, understory removal of hazardous fuels in the wildland-urban interface, thinning of sapling stands, prescribed burning, aquatic structure replacement, road management, the addition of historic trails back to the national forest trail system, and construction of an accessible fishing pier at Lion Lake.

The interdisciplinary team used information gathered during their field review and public comment received to develop four alternatives for the project. The environmental assessment describes those alternatives and analyzes the potential effects of each alternative.

Alternative 1 is the no-action alternative which describes the existing condition of the project area and serves as a point of comparison for the analysis of effects.

Alternative 2 is similar to the proposed action which was shared with the public for comment in November 2016. Alternative 2 proposes approximately 3,243 acres of commercial harvest, 608 acres of sapling thin, 278 acres of understory removal, 7 acres of public post and pole removal, and 759 acres of prescribed burning to improve forest health and diversity and reduce wildfire risk. It proposes the construction of 6.7 miles of new temporary road to conduct harvest activities, all of which will be fully rehabilitated at the conclusion of project activities. It also proposes to reconstruct 7.6 miles of historic road which will be placed in to intermittent stored service following project activities. Alternative 2 proposes to reroute 1.4 miles of road in upper Emery Creek, replace 12 culverts, and install 6 aquatic organism passage structures to improve aquatic habitat on the existing road system. To improve recreational opportunities, alternative 2 proposes to add approximately 12 miles of trail back to the forest trail system, to construct an accessible fishing pier at the South Lion Lake Day Use Area, and improve parking at North Lion Lake Day Use Area.

Alternative 3 seeks to address public comments related to the potential effects to wildlife and wildlife habitat as a result of the proposed activities. It proposes similar types treatment as alternative 2, but modifies the location of where these activities would occur. Alternative 3 proposes approximately 2,226 acres of commercial harvest, 241 acres of sapling thin, 192 acres of understory removal, and 759 acres of prescribed burning. To conduct these activities, approximately 2.8 miles of temporary road will be constructed, and 4.2 miles of historic road will be reconstructed and placed in intermittent stored service. Alternative 3 proposes to reroute on 1.4 miles of road, replace 3 culverts, and install 6 aquatic organism passage structures. Alternative 3 proposes to decommission approximately 12 miles of historic trail instead of returning them to the system. It also proposes the same improvements to day use areas at Lion Lake.



Alternative 4 addresses public comments received related to the use of temporary roads or historic roads for harvest activities, by eliminating all proposed activities that would require the use of temporary roads or historic templates. As a result, alternative 4 proposes to conduct approximately 1,333 acres of commercial harvest, 608 acres of sapling thin, 278 acres of understory removal, and 759 acres of prescribed burning. Alternative 4 proposes to reroute 1.4 miles of road, replace 2 culverts, remove 10 culverts, and install 6 aquatic organism passage structures. Alternative 4 also proposes to add approximately 12 miles of trail back to the forest service system and make improvements to the Lion Lake Day Use areas.

A site-specific forest plan amendment is proposed in Alternative 2 and 4 to conduct 30 days of culvert work in grizzly bear security core. All alternatives propose activities that will create openings greater than 40 acres in size which will require approval by the Regional Forester.

Your comments will help us to determine if additional analysis is necessary and what actions should be considered in a Draft Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact, which are expected to be completed in fall of 2017. The Responsible Official for this project is Forest Supervisor Chip Weber.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 218.25, comments on this proposed project will be accepted for 30 days beginning on the first day after the date of publication of the legal notice in the Daily Inter Lake newspaper. If the comment period ends on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, comments will be accepted until the end of the next Federal working day. Only individuals or entities (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) who submit timely and specific written comments (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) about this proposed project or activity during this or another public comment period established by the responsible official will be eligible to file an objection. Other eligibility requirements are defined by 36 CFR 218.25 (a)(3) and include name, postal address, title of the project and signature or other verification of identity upon request and the identity of the individual or entity who authored the comments. Individual members of an entity must submit their own individual comments in order to have eligibility to object as an individual. A timely submission will be determined as outlined in 36 CFR 218.25 (a)(4). It is the responsibility of the sender to ensure timely receipt of any comments submitted.

Please address comments to District Ranger, Rob Davies, and send written comments to the address and fax listed on the letterhead. To submit comments electronically, please send to [comments-northern-flathead-hungry-horse-glacier-view@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-northern-flathead-hungry-horse-glacier-view@fs.fed.us) with "Hungry Lion" in the subject line. Acceptable formats include MS Word, Word Perfect, RTF, or PDF. Oral comments can be provided at the Hungry Horse Ranger Station during normal business hours via telephone or in person. Normal business hours are 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday, excluding holidays. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of those commenting, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for public inspection.

The interdisciplinary team will be holding a public field trip on **Wednesday, July 26, 2017**. Participants will meet at the North Lion Lake Day Use area at 9:00 am to discuss the project and will travel from there to sites in the project area to discuss proposed activities. Please contact Sarah Canepa, project team leader, if you plan to attend this field trip or would like more information about the project (406) 387-3800 or [scanepa@fs.fed.us](mailto:scanepa@fs.fed.us).

I appreciate your interest in the Hungry Lion Resource Management Project.

Sincerely,



ROBERT DAVIES  
Hungry Horse-Glacier View District Ranger